

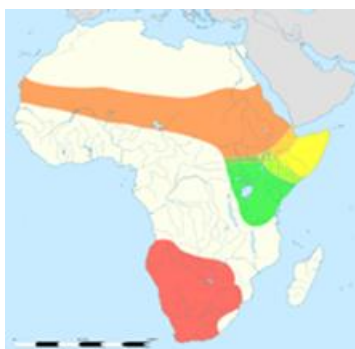
## Ostriches in Ancient Egypt (Pharaonic & Coptic epochs)

By  
Venice Ibrahim Attia



### Ostrich

-scientifically ostrich or common ostrich is known as (*Struthio camelus* “camel-bird”, because it is very large, can survive a long time without water, and it lives in desert and sandy places similarly as the camel), it is a species of large flightless omnivores (feed on both plants and animals) birds native to Africa (mainly northern Africa), most probably they were hunted for sport, their feathers and also for their meat.



Struthio camelus distribution map

<span style="color: orange;">■</span> S. c. camelus	<span style="color: yellow;">■</span> S. molybdophanes
<span style="color: green;">■</span> S. c. massaicus	<span style="color: red;">■</span> S. c. australis

### Scientific classification

<b>Kingdom:</b>	<b>Animalia</b>
<b>Phylum:</b>	<b>Chordata</b>
<b>Class:</b>	<b>Aves</b>
<b>Order:</b>	<b>Struthioniformes</b>
<b>Family:</b>	<b>Struthionidae</b>
<b>Genus:</b>	<b>Struthio</b>
<b>Species:</b>	<b>S. camelus</b>

### Binomial name:

**Struthio camelus: Linnaeus, 1758**

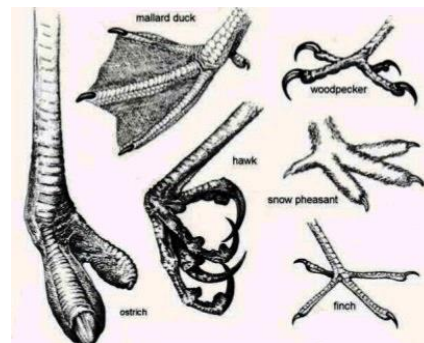
### Subspecies:

- S.c.camelus Linnaeus, 1758  
North African ostrich.
- S. c. australis Gurney, 1868  
Southern ostrich.
- S. c. massaicus Neumann,  
1898 Masai ostrich.
- S. c. syriacus Rothschild,  
1919 Arabian ostrich



Ostriches

**-The average life span of an ostrich is about 50 to 75 years, weighing from 63 to 145 kilograms with a height of about 2.8 m, its body is covered by black to greyish white feathers, the head, neck and legs of both male and female ostriches is nearly bare (without feathers) with a thin layer of down (sort of very small light kind of hair or feather like), the neck and thighs skin of ostrich is gray or pink, dependent on subspecies, it has just two toes on each foot (most birds have four), with the nail on the larger, inner toe resembling to a hoof and the outer toe has no nail, the reduced number of toes is a kind of natural ecological adaptation to accelerate running speed to escape and run away from predators.**



Ostrich foot compared to other birds feet

**-It also possesses the biggest and largest eyes of any other birds, as well as other land vertebrate, sized about 50 mm (2.0 in) in diameter with eye lashes on top.**



Ostrich eyes with long eyelashes, flat broad beak and thin layer of down covering the neck

**-Ostrich feathers hang loosely and don't hook together like feathers of other birds, thus giving them the bushy and shaggy appearance.**



Ostrich feathers



Adult ostrich with shaggy and bushy feather appearance

**-Ostriches are considered as one of the largest living species of birds possessing a long neck and long legs, it is also one of the fastest birds with running speed up to about 70 km/h (19 m/s; 43 mph).**

**-It feeds on seeds, shrubs, grass, fruits, flowers and occasionally they may eat insects and small invertebrates, they can thrive without drinking water for several days, and lives in groups of 5-50 birds, thus males usually have 2-7 females to defend.**

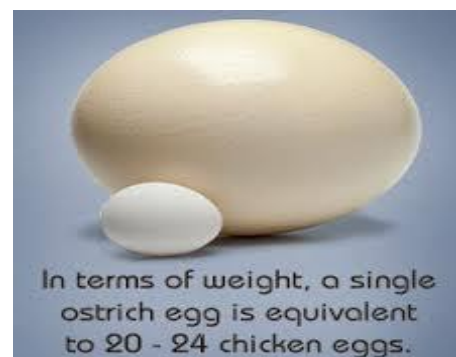


Ostrich family

**-Ostriches become sexually mature when they are 2 to 4 years old, thus females mature six months earlier than males, reproducing small chicks several times over its lifetime, their mating season begins in March ending in August where the female ostrich lays glossy cream-coloured fertilized eggs, with thick shells marked by small pits with average size of 15 cm long, 13 cm wide weighing about 1.4 kilograms (over 20-24 times the weight of an average chicken's egg).**

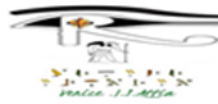


Average Ostrich egg



Ostrich egg compared to an average chicken's egg





-The eggs are incubated by females during day time and by the males during night for 35 to 45 days in a nest made of a simple pit, 30 to 60 cm deep and 3 m wide, the hatched chicks are usually fawn coloured (grayish yellow brown to moderate reddish brown), with dark brown spots, by six months chicks become full-grown and at age 3 or 4 years it reaches maturity.



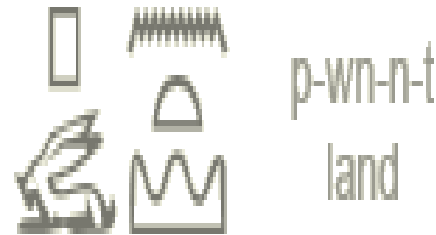
Ostrich eggs incubated and watched over by parents



Ostrich hatched chicks

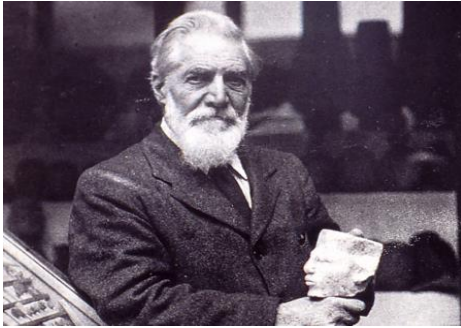
### Ostrich in ancient Egypt

-Ostrich was abundant and broadly distributed in Egypt during the prehistoric and Pharaonic epochs, most probably received, brought or hunted from Kush (Nubia), Ethiopia, and Punt country referred to as “Ta netjer”, the “land of the god” (east coast of Africa, corresponding to modern coastal Ethiopia, Eritria and Djibouti).



Egyptian spelling "pwenet"

-Ancient Egyptians did not consider the ostrich as a sacred dietary birds but they greatly valued it for its feathers and eggs, thus association of new life and or rebirth with the ostrich egg has been verified by numerous archaeological finds, their amulets were considered having power conferred upon the dead and such amulets were depictions of two ostrich plumes supposed to fly away in the wind, bearing deceased soul, where the pair of plumes used as a vehicle for the soul of the deceased (Flinders Petrie, Amulets).



William Flinders Petrie, (1853 -1903)  
courtesy of Petrie Museum, University College  
London.



Charles Kuentz (1895 - 1978 ) American–born  
French Egyptologist who was director of the Institut  
français d'archéologie orientale from 1940 to 1953



Egyptian Ostrich Plume Amulet.



Prancing birds, identified by C. Kuentz as ostriches.  
Kuentz, p.87

**-Charles Kuentz (1895 - 1978 )  
American–born French  
Egyptologist who was director of  
the Institut français d'archéologie  
orientale from 1940 to 1953  
identified a relief with prancing  
(dancing) birds in Madinet Habu  
Temple as ostriches, he also  
translated the Hieroglyphs on King  
Ahmose I stela that describes the  
king as dancing ostrich.**

**-Ostrich feathers and eggs were  
used for decoration, thus high  
ranked officers, elite charioteers  
and wealthy individuals wore**

ostrich feather on their heads as a sign of elegance, also royal horses were decorated with ostrich feathers upon their heads.



Bas relief from the temple of Merenptah: Amenophis III on his triumphant chariot showing the horses adorned with feathers



Tomb wall depicting Queen Nefertari wife of Rameses II wearing an ostrich feather on her head

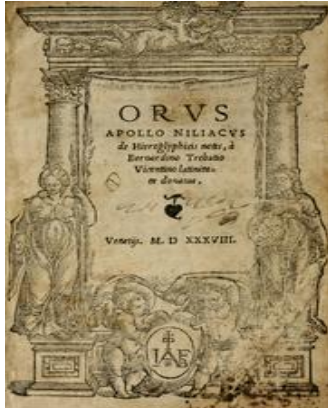
-Pliny mentioned that the eggs of the ostrich were prized and valued for their large size and strong hard shells, and were employed and used as vessels for certain purposes, the eggs were also eaten and the feathers of wings and tail were used as ornaments for the crests and helmets of warriors.



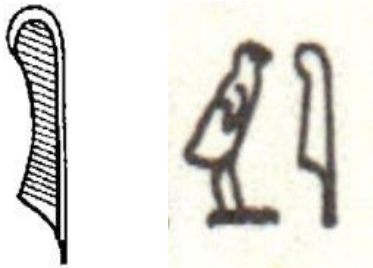
Pliny (Gaius Plinius Secundus 23 -79 AD)

-Also Horapollo( Horus Apollo; Greek: Ὡραπόλλων, one of the last leaders of Egyptian priesthood at a school in Menouthis near Alexandria during the reign of Zeno AD 474–491, the author of a treatise, titled Hieroglyphica) wrote about the Egyptian cult and the use of the Ostrich feather "The man rendering justice to all, was represented by the ostrich feather; because that bird, unlike others, has all its feathers equal."





The cover page of The Horapollo's Hieroglyphica.



Ostrich feather, emblem of the Egyptian Goddess Ma'at representing justice.

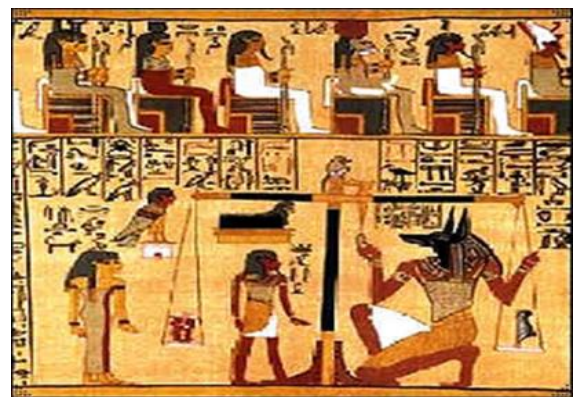
-The ostrich has its importance in ancient Egyptian culture and religion where its feather was the sign of the deity Ma'at, which was a symbol of purity, thus the justified deceased were pictured wearing ostrich feathers on their heads, where an ostrich feather was the weight against the heart of the deceased during judgment.



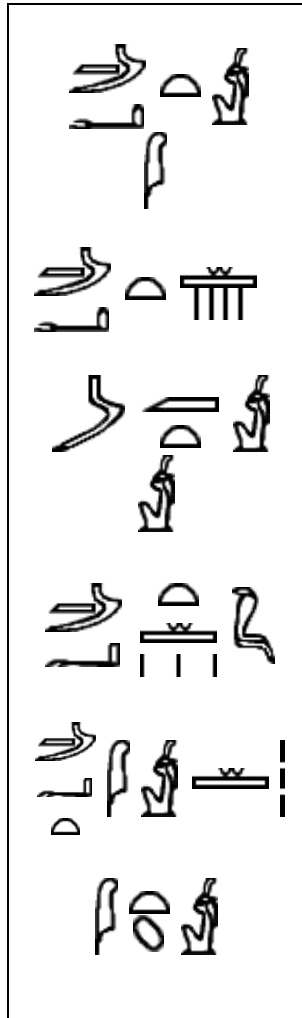
God Anubis weighing the Heart against a feather.



Egyptian Goddess Ma'at with an ostrich feather on her head, Ma'at daughter of the sun god Ra and goddess of truth, justice and harmony, associated with balance of things on Earth



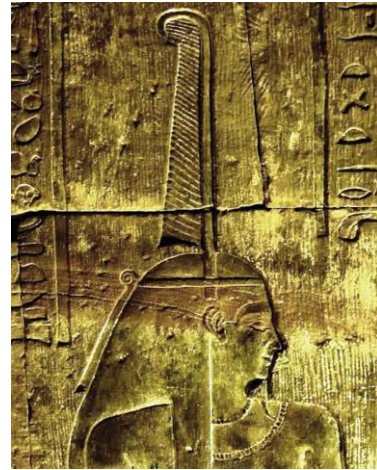
Judgement in the Hall of Truths, taken from the Papyrus of Ani Book of the Dead, showing weighing the heart of the deceased against a feather.



Different spelling of Goddess Ma'at  
in hieroglyphs

**-An ostrich plume symbolized truth and justice in ancient Egypt, and was the emblem of the goddess Ma'at who personified these virtues, and who was the patron-saint of the judges, her head is adorned with an ostrich feather, her eyes are closed, similarly as Justice is blindfolded, Ma'at is always portrayed as a woman with a white ostrich feather on her head carrying a scepter in**

**one hand and an ankh sign in the other.**



Wall relief of Ma'at with an ostrich feather on her head in the upper eastern part of Edfu temple, Egypt.



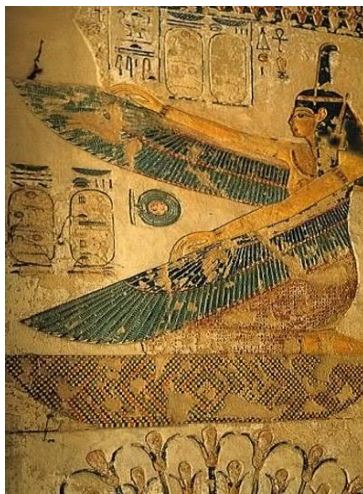
Goddess Ma'at statue made of Gold and lapis lazuli  
from the third Intermediate Period 800–700 BCE  
Egyptian Museum, Cairo

**-The image of goddess Ma'at was the most precious offering for the gods, and was attached to the necklace of the chief judge as a badge of office and as a dedication to justice and a promise to applying it always.**





Winged Egyptian Goddess Ma'at, Kom Ombo temple  
Egypt



Goddess Ma'at kneeling with outspread wings, 19th  
Dynasty. Tomb of Siptah. Valley of the Kings.  
Western Thebes.

**-Ostrich feathers were worn in ancient Egypt, being stuck in their hair, and a religious significance was possibly connected with this custom, also other gods were depicted holding or wearing ostrich (Ma'at) feather as a symbol of justice.**



Statue (figure) of the God Re-Horakhty with an  
ostrich plume, New Kingdom, Late Period, 1550-332  
B.C.



Faience, polychrome inlay depicting God Thoth (ibis  
bird) with ostrich (Ma'at) feather, Late Period  
(Ptolemaic), 4th century B.C  
Metropolitan museum.

**-Ostrich feathers are also invariably found in the hair of soldiers, and there are some ancient Egyptian depictions and carvings showing warriors adorned with ostrich feathers and that applies with chariot horses.**



Heads of horses and warriors adorned with ostrich feathers

**–Royalties and princesses had fans made from ostrich feathers, thus there was a high ranked person responsible for the king fans bearing the title: "Fan bearer to the right of the king", also ostrich feathers were used to make fancy fans and decorations.**



Fan Bearer to the right of the King



view of Khaemwaset, a son of Ramesses III, holding a khu fan ( made of ostrich plume).



royal chariots escorted by two female attendants, holding plume-shaped fans tomb of Meryra High Priest of Aten



Ancient Egyptian standard feather fans, the Khu papyrus staff with ostrich feather carried by princes, boats and oars, Osiride crowns, feathered horse headdresses, flowers and vases. Grammar of Ornament by Owen Jones.

**-Ostrich eggs were related to divine and deity births and world creation mythologies (Lefébure 1910), it was also believed that they breathe life within its shell and could bring air to the deceased (Drioton 1933).**

**–During the dynastic Egypt the resurrectional aspects of the egg were widespread and was a common belief among Egyptians, and that explains the abundance of egg shells and or their fragments in various tombs and graves where they were believed to be after life resurrection tokens and a symbol of rebirth.**

**-Whole ostrich eggs were used as bowls and containers especially used as a baby feeder containers, and were placed in the graves this is explained by the discovery of such ostrich egg shell containers as well as fragments of shells within numerous number of ancient Egyptian children graves ( for example at Abu Simbel 215:25, ostrich eggs were found with an infant “Emery & Kirwin 1935: 459”, also in cemetery 101, Grave 594, an egg was found along with a burial of an infant ).**



Egg-shaped jar from the Pillared Hall precinct at HK6 (photo by J. Rossiter).

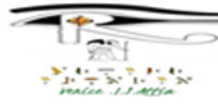
**-Fragments of ostrich eggshells (small pieces) were also used in making various shapes of beads used in making necklaces, it has been used in some instances as a sort of stamps.**



ostrich eggshell rocker-stamp tool, rectangular in shape with notches incised around the edges, and an oval in shape bead hole with a drilled from the exterior to the interior through the center found in Bir Kiseiba, Egyptian western desert.  
British museum, Credit of British Museum

**-Ostrich eggs were represented and depicted regularly in ancient Egyptian art, knowing that the ostrich is among the first species of birds which have a lot of pictorial depictions as evidence of their abundance in various epochs in**





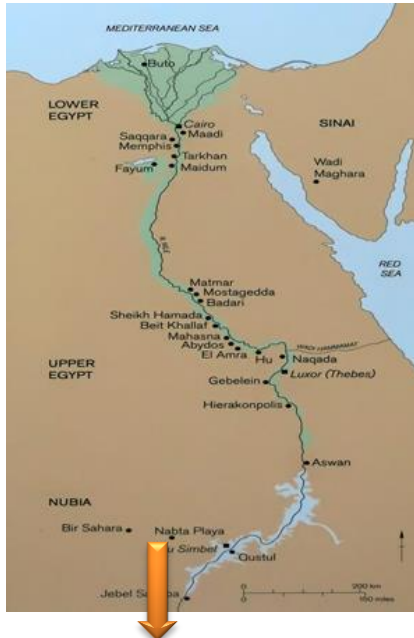
ancient Egypt, (thus it is important to mention that physical “bones and skeletal remains” of the ostrich itself are scarce despite the abundance of its eggshells as well as its feathers in the form of fans.

-Ostrich findings in different Egyptian epochs are as follows:-

### In Neolithic Egypt

-The Neolithic epoch of Ancient Egypt( about 8600 - 4400 BC) directly before the predynastic era.

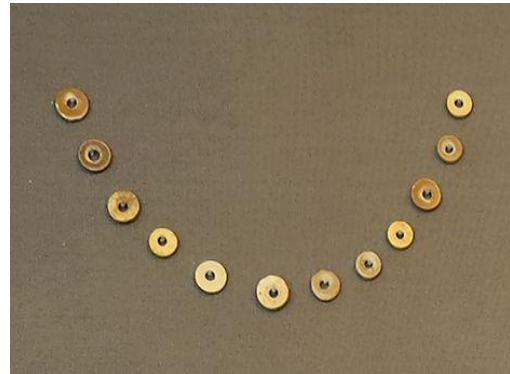
-Ostrich egg shell beads has been found in the site of Nabta Playa (lower Nubia area in upper Egypt) in different areas along with tools that were used to drill their holes ,polish and finish them, all preserved in good condition.



Nabta Playa (lower Nubia area in upper Egypt).



Ostrich eggshells, prepared and completed beads, Photo:Don Hitchcock 2015, British Museum



Ostrich eggshell beads, 8000 - 6750 BC Photo:Don Hitchcock 2015, British Museum



Flint tools used in drilling holes in ostrich egg shells beads

Photo:Don Hitchcock 2015, British Museum

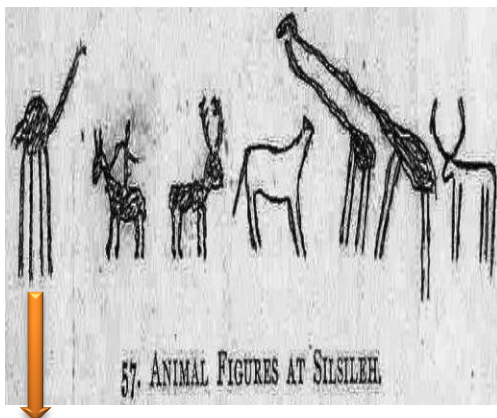


stones with grooves used for polishing ostrich eggshell beads,  
Photo: Don Hitchcock 2015, British Museum

### In Pre-dynastic Egypt

-The Pre-dynastic epoch of Ancient Egypt (prior to 3,100 BC) is the period between the early Neolithic and the beginning of the Pharaonic monarchy begun with the rule of King Narmer founder of the First Dynasty who unified lower and upper Egypt .

-Excavated drawings of ostriches were recognized on some rocks on cliffs on the Nile valley, upper Egypt desert and in Nubia dating from predynastic Egypt.

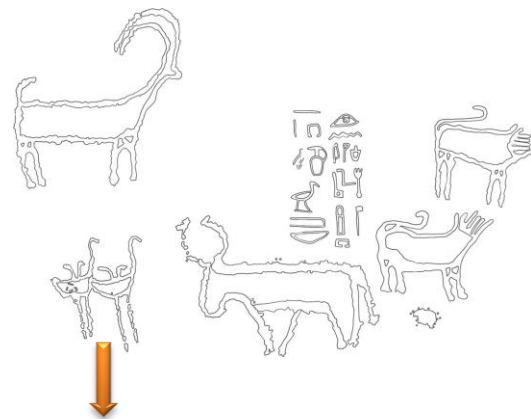


Egyptian petroglyphs at Gebel el-Silsila, showing several animals including an ostrich.

- The largest concentration findings of ostrich eggs discovered in one place in Predynastic Egypt was found at a tomb in Hierakonpolis (Nekhen tomb).

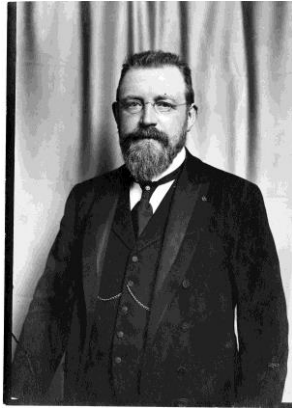


Plate from Winkler's Rock-Drawings of Southern Upper Egypt showing animal petroglyphs.



Ostrich Rock-Drawings of Nag el-Hamdulab (Aswan) upper Egypt

- Ostrich eggs with traces and remains of painting and engraving have been found in prehistoric tombs of Egypt, and are figured by Jean Capart (Primitive Art in Egypt, p. 40).



Jean Capart (1877 –1947) a Belgian Egyptologist, director of the El-Kab excavations 1937- 1939, 1945 Smithsonian Institution Archives.



Incised ostrich eggshell pre-dynastic Egypt (Naqada I and II). housed in the Egyptian Museum, Cairo (inv.N.93) Courtesy of the Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

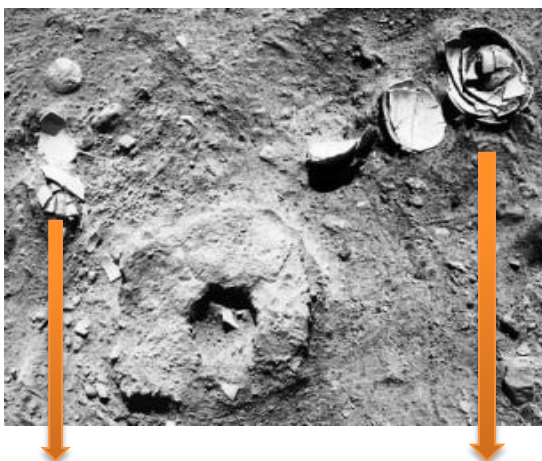
**-An ostrich egg (broken into pieces and rebuilt through restoration) found between 1930 and 1948 in Maadi area, from predynastic lower Egypt dated to the 4th millennium**



Site of predynastic cemetery of HK6 at Hierakonpolis



Restored ostrich egg shell from Maadi area, from predynastic lower Egypt dated to the 4th millennium

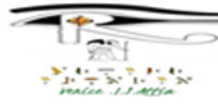


Predynastic cemetery of HK6 at Hierakonpolis where clusteral fragments of ostrich egg shells has been found



Incised ostrich eggshell pre-dynastic Egypt (Naqada I and II). in the Oriental Institute, Chicago (E12322). Courtesy of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago

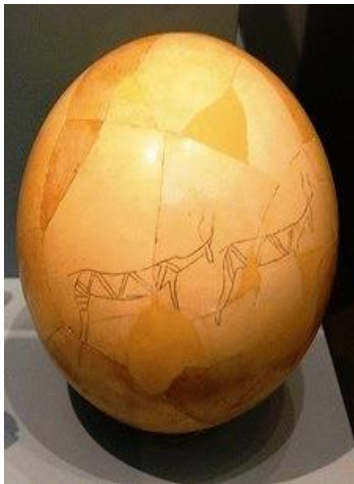




Incised ostrich eggshell from pre-dynastic Egypt (Naqada I) Nubian Museum, Egypt



Decorated comb with an ostrich shape made of bone  
Predynastic, Late Naqada I–Naqada II Date: ca.  
3900–3500 B.C. Metropolitan Museum



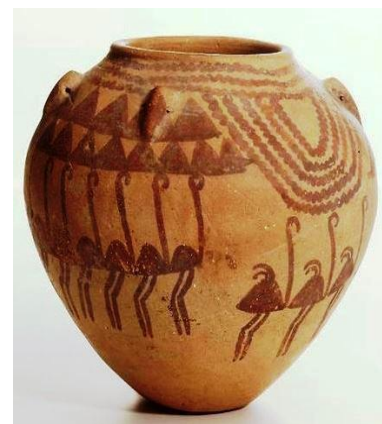
Ostrich egg with a blow hole in one end, and incised  
decoration, Naqada, grave 1480,  
Ashmolean Museum



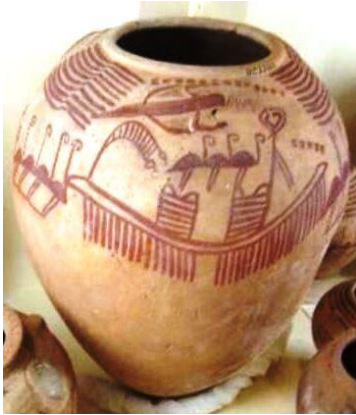
Egyptian Late predynastic palette with an Ostrich  
shape (Manchester palette). Naqada II

**-Ancient Egyptian artists also made ostrich egg figures from clay and ornamented it with black zigzagged lines and white spots.**

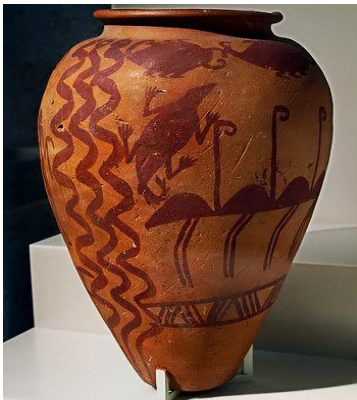
**-Some daily used items such as combs, palettes, pottery jars, pots, containers... decorated with an ostrich shape has been found from Egyptian predynastic period**



Painted pottery vase decorated with ostriches,  
Naqada epoch. Rijksmuseum van Ouheden, Leiden.



Painted pottery vase decorated with ostriches with other shapes, Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology



Decorated pottery urn decorated with ostriches pre-dynastic Egypt, (Neus Museum Berlin).

**-Ancient Egyptians used ostrich egg shells to make beads used to make necklaces of varioe shapes such as beads found in HK43 Burial 300, which belongs an infant(child) from Predynastic Egyptian epoch at the site of Hierakonpolis (3600 B.C.).**



Ostrich eggshell beads from HK43 Burial 300, the burial of an infant

### **-In Dynastic Egypt**

**-The dynastic epoch of Ancient Egypt begins with the regine of King Narmer (Menes), founder of the First Dynasty who unified lower and upper Egypt, starting the Pharaonic monarchy and the great legacy of a long epoch of civilization ( starting with the early dynastic 3100BC till the end of the late period 525BC).**

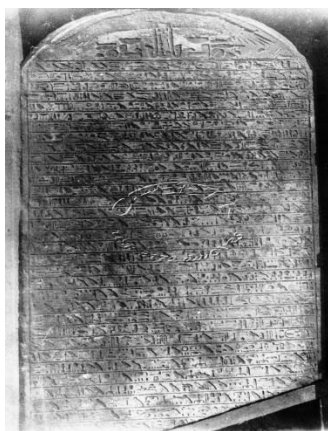


King Narmer (Menes), first king of the First Dynasty (31st century BC), Narmer Palette, , Cairo museum

**-The ancient Egyptians were aware of the morning remarkable behaviour of ostriches when they run around flapping with their wings in a dance filled with happiness with a sense of pride, triumph and feeling strong, thus King Ahmose I (lead the conquest against the Hyksos, 18 dynasty- New Kingdom) was described in a his stela (housed in Cairo museum CG 34001 - KIU 575) as an ostrich in such beautiful scene as follows:- “like Atem in the east of the sky when the ostriches dance in the valleys”**



20 m jrty stwtꜣf m hrw mj Jtm m j3btt pt njw hr jb3 m  
jnwt mj psd J3hw m  
“like Atem in the east of the sky  
when the ostriches dance in the valleys”



Stela of King Ahmose I(housed in Cairo museum CG 34001 - KIU 575)



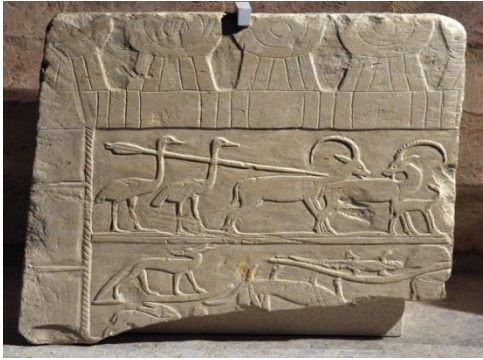
A fragmentary statue of Ahmose I, Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Mummy of Ahmose I

**- In various Dynastic Egyptian eras ostrich drawings, paintings and depictions are frequently seen on the walls of tombs especially in hunting scenes and expeditions to the west and south of Africa (Lebia, Nubia& Punt Land.**





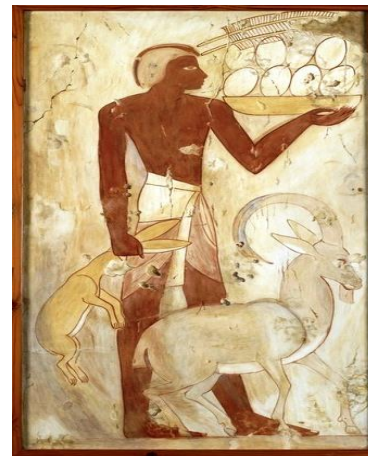
Relief with a hunting scene depicting 2 ostriches with other animals (12th Dynasty)  
Berlin, Neues Museum



Domesticated ostriches depiction on walls of ancient Egyptian tomb



Relief depicting a military expedition by Ramses II from the temple of Beit el-Wali, in New Kalabsha Lower Nubia.



Copy of wall painting of a servant carrying a bowl containing ostrich eggs, holding a rabbit (hare) in the other hand and an ibex, tomb of Horemheb (TT78), Sheikh Abd el-Qurna, Thebes. Reign of Thutmose III - Amenhotep II, New Kingdom, 18th Dynasty, N. de Garis Davies (1881-1965).  
Ashmolean Museum.

**-Also it is known and proved that ancient Egyptians domesticated and raised ostriches in special farms for their meat, feathers and eggs, some paintings show tamed herd of adult ostriches led by their owners or persons in charge of the ostrich farm .**



Undecorated ostrich egg: intended for use as a container, with an opening in one side, Early Dynastic (Egypt), British museum.

- During the Fifth Dynasty (2498-2345 BC) Egypt witnessed flourishing trade with Punt Land), thus the earliest recorded ancient Egyptian expedition to Punt was organized by Pharaoh Sahure of the Fifth Dynasty (25th century BC). Subsequently, more expeditions to Punt in the Sixth, Eleventh, Twelfth and Eighteenth dynasties of Egypt were recorded.



Head of statue of Sahure  
Metropolitan Museum of Art.



Relief with a depiction of ostrich eggs and plumes

**-Queen Hatshepsut during the Eighteenth encouraged trade by building a fleet in the Red Sea to facilitate trade between Egypt and other areas of the ancient world**

especially the eastern coast of Africa, this is clearly recorded on Hatshepsut's mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri with drawings of five ship voyage on reliefs .

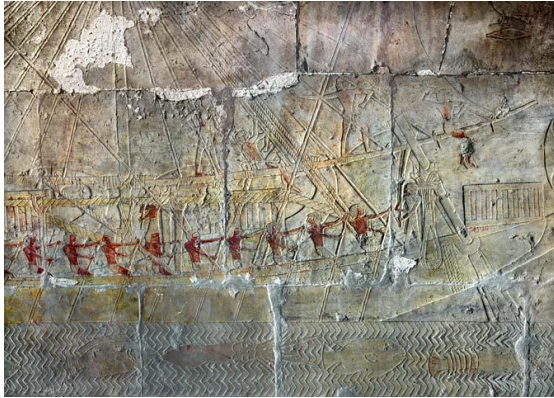


Queen Hatshepsut statue, Hatshepsut temple, Egypt.



Egyptian expedition to Punt during the reign of queen Hatshepsut

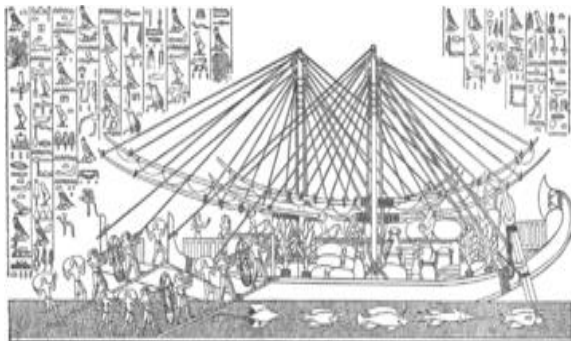




Detail of Bas Relief of expedition to Punt  
Hatshepsut temple Hatshepsut at Deir el-Bahri



Reliefs depicting the expedition to Punt  
Deir el-Bahri temple



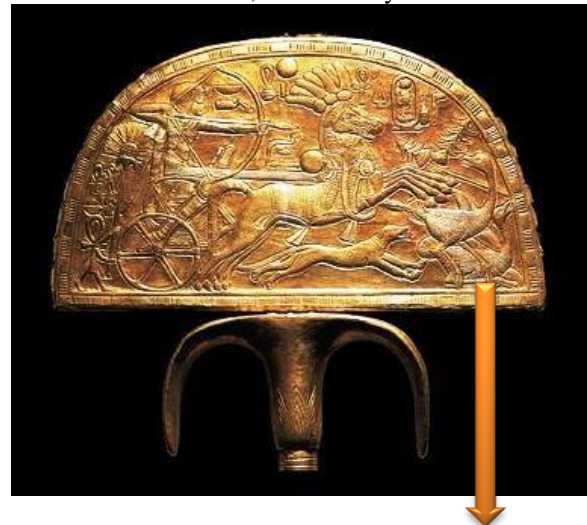
Egyptian ship carrying goods from the Land of Punt  
heading to Egypt

**-A description in Tutankhamen's tomb of the king hunting ostriches by bow and arrow as a privilege of**

**the pharaohs showing elegant strength.**

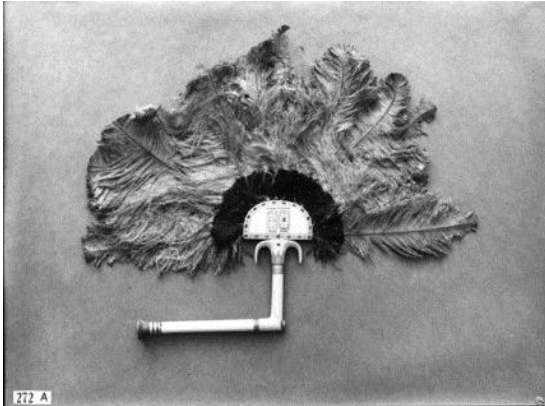


Gold funerary mask of king Tutankhamen found in  
his tomb, 14th century BC



Flabellum, a fan-shaped head piece made of gold and wood from the tomb of Tutankhamun showing Tutankhamun on a chariot aiming his arrow at an ostrich., Valley of the Kings, Thebes. 1350 BCE, New Kingdom. Egyptian Museum, Cairo.





Tutankhamun's ostrich feather fan  
Image by Harry Burton  
Griffith Institute, Oxford University



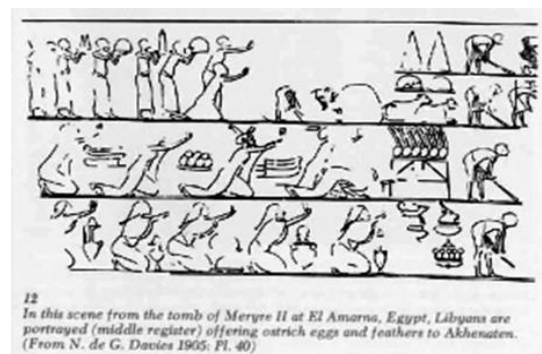
Tutankhamun's Ivory Fan Trimmed with Ostrich Feathers

**-An expedition to Punt, probably of a peaceful nature probably for trading and importing purposes is recorded on the wall connecting the two Karnak pylons of King Harmhab (Horemheb) of the nineteenth dynasty, the relief shows the king at the right, holding audience, receiving the chiefs of Punt approaching from the left, bearing sacks of gold dust, ostrich feathers, etc. (Breasted, Ancient Records of Egypt, III, 37).**



King Horemheb

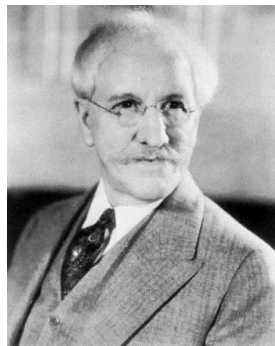
**-In the rock temple of Abu Simbel there are scenes depicting the war of king Ramses II against the Libyans and the Nubia war, in one of these scenes king Ramses sits enthroned on the right side; approaching from the left are two long lines of African people bringing furniture of ebony and ivory, panther hides, gold in large rings, bows, myrrh, shields, elephants' tusks, billets of ebony, ostrich feathers, ostrich eggs, live animals, including monkeys, panthers, a giraffe, ibexes, a dog, oxen with carved horns, and an ostrich.**



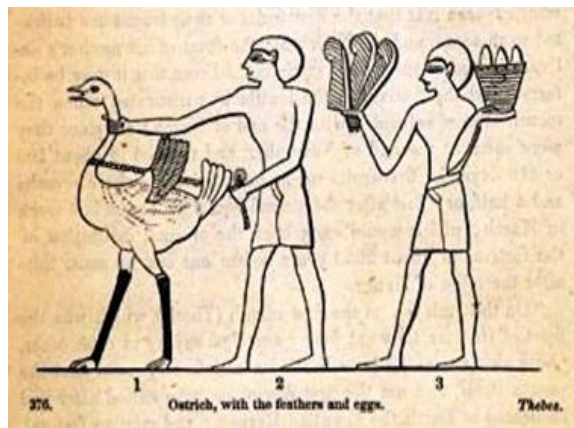
Scene from the tomb of Meryre II at El Amarna, Egypt, Libyans are portrayed (middle register) offering ostrich eggs and feathers to Akhenaten (N. de G Daveies 1905:Pl, 40)



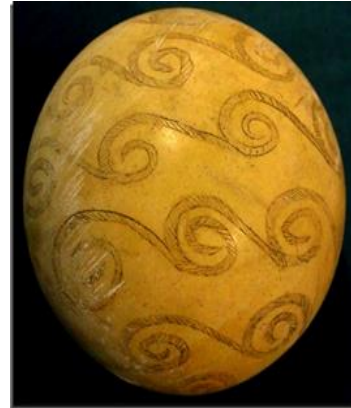
**-Breasted (op. cit., Ill, 475), illustrates a very instructive Egyptian scene , where a man on the left side of the illustration leads a captured ostrich, grasping its neck with his right hand, while his left holds a rope slung around the bird's neck (double precaution hints holding the ostrich well with strength), another man on the right side carries three ostrich feathers and a basket filled with three ostrich eggs.**



James Henry Breasted  
American Egyptologist, archaeologist, and historian  
August 27, 1865- December 2, 1935



Breasted instructive illustration of an Egyptian scene , where a man leads a captured ostrich and another carrying ostrich feathers and eggs.



Decorated ostrich egg, Egyptian, 2nd millennium BC  
Musees Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire, Brussels,  
Belgium

**-In the tomb of the “queen Aa Hotep”, mother of Amasis I (about 1703 B.C.) a semicircular fan was discovered decorated all over with gold plates and provided along its edge with perforations for receiving the feathers.**

**-In the tomb of the scribe and grain accountant “Nebamun” New Kingdom, 18th dynasty, reign of King Akhenaten a black ostrich Feather fan with a wooden handle was found now housed in the British museum**



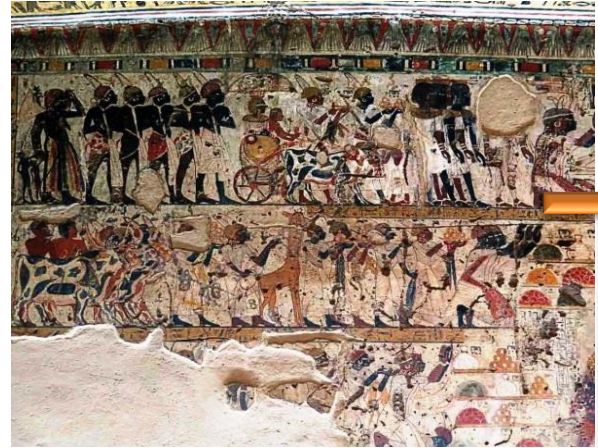
A black ostrich Feather fan with a wooden handle.  
Tomb of the scribe and grain accountant Nebamun  
New Kingdom, 18th dynasty, reign of King  
Akhenaten. British museum.



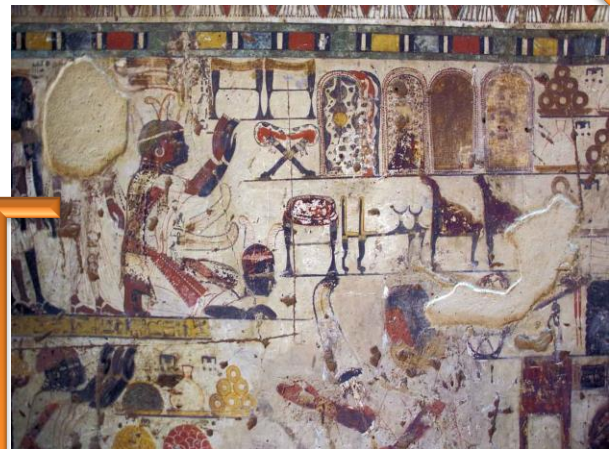
**-In Tomb TT 40 of "Amenhotep" (familiar name Huy) who was probably "scribe of the correspondence of the King's Son of Kush, Merymose" having several titles such as: "Fan bearer to the right of the king" and "Overseer of the gold countries of Amon"; "Overseer of the gold countries of the Lord of the Two Lands" ) who lived during the reign of Tutankhamun and located in the Theban necropolis at Qurnet Mura'i, there is a depiction in the transverse hall on the south side west wall showing some offerings brought to the king from Nubia including ostrich feathers.**



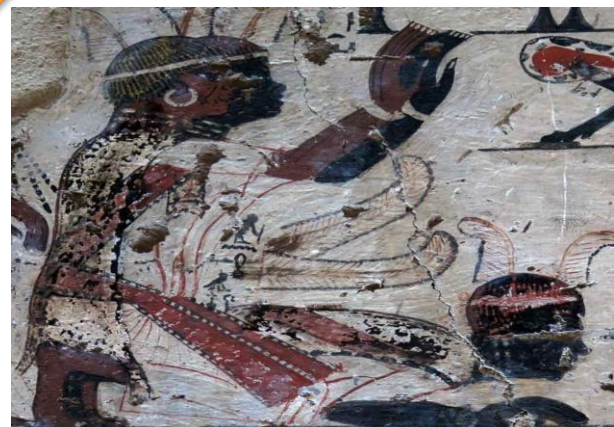
Block statue of Amenhotep (Huy), found at Abydos.  
British Museum.



Seen from tomb TT 40 of Huy



Ostrich feathers offered to the king tomb TT 40 of  
Huy



Details showing ostrich feathers adorning heads and  
offered to the king





### **-In Christianity & Coptic Egypt**

**-The ostrich is mentioned in the holy Bible several times as follows:-**

**+ In Job 30:29:- “I have become a brother to jackals And a companion of ostriches”**

**+In Job 39:13–18:- “13 The wings of the ostrich wave proudly, but are they the pinions and plumage of love? 14 For she leaves her eggs to the earth and lets them be warmed on the ground, 15 forgetting that a foot may crush them and that the wild beast may trample them. 16 She deals cruelly with her young, as if they were not hers; though her labor be in vain, yet she has no fear, 17 because God has made her forget wisdom and given her no share in understanding. 18 When she rouses herself to flee, she laughs at the horse and his rider”.**

**+In Leviticus 11:16:- “and the ostrich and the owl and the sea gull and the hawk in its kind”**

**+In Deuteronomy 14:15:- “and the ostrich, the owl, the sea gull, and the hawk in their kinds ”.**

**+In Lamentations 4:3 :- “Even jackals offer the breast, They nurse their young; But the daughter of my people has become cruel Like ostriches in the wilderness”.**

**+In Micah 1:8:- “Because of this I**

**must lament and wail, I must go barefoot and naked; I must make a lament like the jackals And a mourning like the ostriches”.**

**+In Isaiah 43:20:- “The beasts of the field will glorify Me, The jackals and the ostriches, Because I have given waters in the wilderness And rivers in the desert, To give drink to My chosen people ”**

**+In Isaiah 13:21:- “But desert creatures will lie down there, And their houses will be full of owls; Ostriches also will live there, and shaggy goats will frolic there”.**

**+In Isaiah 34:13:- “Thorns will come up in its fortified towers, Nettles and thistles in its fortified cities; It will also be a haunt of jackals And an abode of ostriches”.**

**+In Jeremiah 50:39:- “Therefore the desert creatures will live there along with the jackals; The ostriches also will live in it, And it will never again be inhabited Or dwelt in from generation to generation”.**

**- Eggs generally bear significant symbolism in christianity as follows:-**

**\*a symbol of the resurrection because the small chick breaks from the egg at its birth, just as Christ broke forth from the tomb.**



**\*symbol izes the promise of hope for new life.**

**\* a symbol of chastity and purity, since the chick is protected within the shell**

**\* a symbol eternity.**

**\* symbol izes being watchful over self soul so as it would grow better.**

**– Egyptian Copts differentiate the ostrich egg from all others eggs as bringing to mind the remarkable and ceaseless care with which the parent ostriches guard their eggs, thus their vigilance remind the believers that their thoughts should be fixed continually on spiritual things.**

**–An ostrich egg or an imitation of it is hung in the dome of Coptic churches in front of the altar**

**“ before or infront of the iconostasis (Icon carrier)” as a reminder of God.**

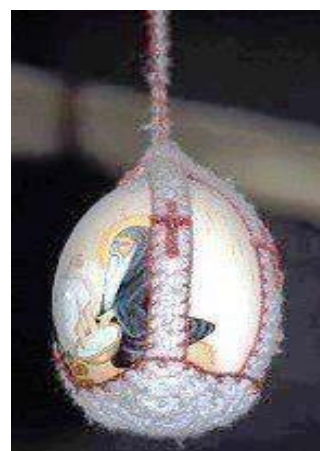
**-Egyptian Copts generally has the same concept which is similar to that of the ancient Egyptians ( their ancistors) where an ostrich Egg symbolizes the easily emergence of life from death.**

**- Coptic church took the ideaof an ostrich egg and its symbolism and used it as a pointer toward resurrection, where the ostrich eggs is known to hatch after intense**

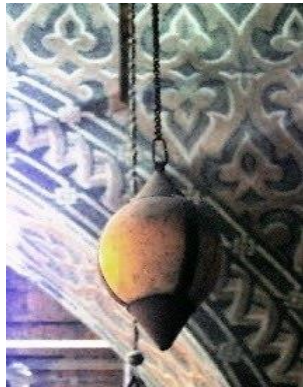
**staring and concentration as well as caring of the parents during the incubation period and this is a quite destenctive fitting description of the spiritual life and the attitude should be and recommended during prayers especially during church services at mass.**



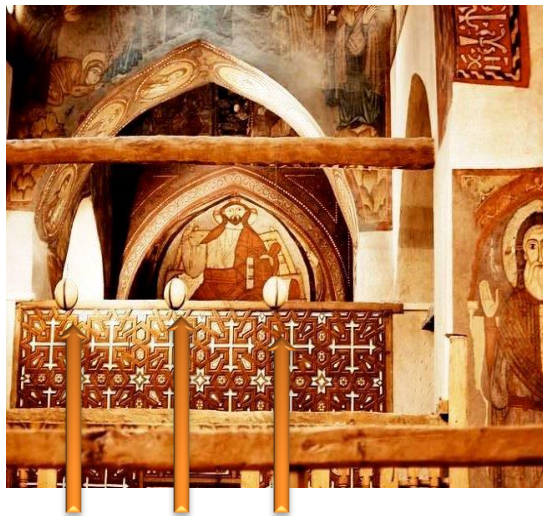
Four ostrich eggs hung from the church in St. Makarios Monastery in Wadi Natroun.



An ostrich egg hung in a church in St. Bishoy Monastery in Wadi Natroun, Egypt.



Ostrich Egg in the Hanging Church Cairo



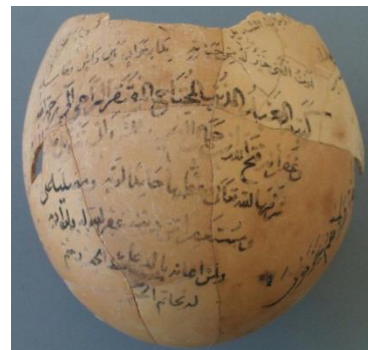
Ostrich eggs in front iconostasis in one of the churches of the Monastery of St. Antony (4th Century AD)



An ostrich egg in front iconostasis in one of the churches of the Monastery of St. Paul the Hermit (3rd- 4th Century AD)

### Other findings of ostriches in Egypt

-A 500-year-old eulogy ( Fifteenth century), written on an ostrich egg, discovered broken into pieces in the remains of a mausoleum, covered with a eulogy written in Arabic letters, it has been rebuilt through restoration into one piece, thus the text has been translated by Dr. Dionisius Agius and appears to be written on the occasion of a funeral of a young man and consists of quotations from the Koran and poetic verses, saying that death will be better than life.



A 500-year-old eulogy, written on an Ostrich, Egypt

- painted ostrich egg shell fragments were found in trench BE95/96-7 in the Berenike Project, which is a dig in the eastern Egyptian desert that is excavating the remains of Bernike, a harbour on the Red Sea coast active between the 3rd century BC and the 6th century AD, (Hughes, 2001) they were painted in red with Greek letters



and a pentagram star (Zych & Sidebotham, 2010).



Ostrich eggs painted with a red motif. 3-6th century BC, Berenike, Egypt (Zych & Sidebotham, 2010).

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